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To The

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By Mr. *Will. Bridge*, sometime Fellow of *Emanuel* Colledge in *Cambridge*, and late preacher of the Word of God at *Tarmouth*.

I commend this to be reprinted as a profitable and serious discourse.

James Allen.

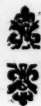


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CHAP. I:

The OLD MANS Weakness.

THERE is no state or condition of men but some grace, goodness, or virtue, may and can plant upon: as there is no occasion but some sin will grow upon,

Yet there is some grace, or virtue that is most suited unto some condition, & will grow best upon such a soyl: therefore the Apostle *John* saith, *I write unto you Fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one, I write unto you little children, because ye have known the Father, 1 Epistle John. 2. 13.* It is our wisdom therefore to observe what our state and soyle is, and to plant our ground accordingly. Now old age is a dry & barren ground. The state of old age is a state of weakness and of much infirmity. *Solomon* calls it *the evil day, Eccl. 12. 1.* And evil it is in regard of natural and of moral infirmities.

1. Evil in regard of natural infirmities; for the *the Clouds return after the rain.* In the time of youth if a man be sick and that cloud hath emptied it self by some great sickness, he is well again, & a fair day of health is upon him. But if a man be stricken with years, and a cloud of sickness doth arise upon him,

though that cloud hath discharged it self by some great distemper, yet he hath still *infirmittas post ingentem tempestatem*: still it rains in upon him and he can hardly sit dry in his old Cottage and therefore Solomon saith of this evil day, that then the Clouds return after the rain. Then also the Sun & Moon & Stars are darkned, that is the reason, memory, fancy, & all those faculties which do receive and give out our reason, v. 2. Then the keepers of the house do tremble, that is the hands and the arms, & the strong men bow themselves, that is, the thighs and legs, and the grinders cease because they are few; that is, the teeth, & those that look out of the windows be darkned, that is, the eyes, v. 3. and the doors are shut in the streets when the sound of the grinding is low, that is, the lips are shut & kept close lest the meat should fall out of the mouth through want of teeth, and all the daughters of my sick are brought low, that is, both the speech & hearing, v. 4. then the Almona-tree flourisheth, that is, the head grows gray and hoary, a Grasshopper is a burthen, for an old man cannot bear the lightest burden, and desire faileth, that is, the appetite unto meat, drink, and the Marriage bed, v. 5. then the silver Cord is loosed, that is, the marrow of the back bone which runneth from the brain through the neck to the bottom of the back, & the golden bowl is broken, that is, the Scull which is round, yellow, & doth contain and preserve the brain, and the Pitcher is broken at the Fountain, that is, the bladder which did hold the urine, which in old age doth insensibly pass away, and the Wheel is broken at the Cistern,

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Cistern, that is, the Lungs are broken off from their motion of respiration or inspiration by Phlegm from the Stomack, or the circulation of the blood interrupted and hindred, *V. 6.* Thus the natural infirmities of an old Man, are very many, & the day of old age is an evil day in that respect: yea, upon this account an old man is but half a man, for eyes hath he and seeth not, ears hath he and heareth not,

2 But as the day of old age is an evil day in regard of natural, so in regard of moral infirmities. For,

1. Then men are apt to be too drowsie and remiss in the things of God.

2. Then are they apt to be too covetous and tenacious for the things of this world: *fugientem sequimur Mundum*: as wantonness is the young mans vice, so covetousness is the old mans sin.

3. Then are they apt to be too timorous & fearful; we read but of one man that came to Christ by night out of fear, and he was a rich and old man, *Nicodemus*.

4. Then are they apt to be too touchy; Peevish, angry, and froward, for old age is a continued sickness, and in sickness men are apt to be angry.

5. Then are they also unapt to be taught, and are very unteachable, they think they know more then others, and that they are not now to learn, *Eccles. 4. 13.*

6. Then are they hard to be pleased, and as hard to please others.

7. Full of complaints they are of the present times, praising the former dayes of old, which the old

The Old Mans Weakness:

men of those dayes did as much complain of, as they do of these.

8. And of all men if they be not good, they are the most impenitent, for by custom and long continuance in sin they are the most hardned, and so the least penitent.

9. Apt they are also to think and speak of the sins of their youth with delight, so to commit them again by thought and word, which they cannot come at by their action.

10. They are full of suspitions, and very apt to surmise, suspect and fear the worst, for, experience giving notice of former dangers keep their Souls in continual Alarm.

Having therefore, and labouring under all these and other infirmities both natural & moral a three-fold work is incumbent upon the aged. First, to comfort and bear up themselves against their natural infirmities. 2. To strengthen themselves against their moral infirmities, & to root them out. 3. To plant that positive grace and goodness in the room thereof which doth best suit with their soyl and condition.

CHAP. II.

The OLD MANS STAFF.

Comforts against the natural infirmities of old age are very many.

1. Christ himself did bear them, & will as our high Priest,

Priest doth sympathize with us under them, such did he single out for his care & cure, when he was here on Earth, *Joh. 5.* there were many that lay by the Pool of *Bethesda*, among the rest there was one that had lien sick and diseased 38. years. A young man therefore he was not, he would have stept into the Pool, but others stept in before him, and he had no man to help him in. A poor neglected man he was, whom others minded not. Yet this was the man that Christ came to cure, whom Christ minded and sought out, and cured, what then, though you be a poor, old, neglected person, that have lien long under your infirmities, yet Christ hath a cure for you, and what though others regard you not, and mind you not, Christ hath a cure for you. The blind men cryed, and their cries put Christ to a stand for mercy, *Math. 20. 31, 32.*

2. Though your infirmities be never so many and great, yet you have a peculiar honour that is twisted with your infirmity, for it is called the Crown of old age; In times of the old Testament, they were to rise up and to bow before the Ancient, yea, it is our duty to honour them. for this honour is joyned and commanded with the fear of God, *Lev. 19. 32. Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old Man, and fear thy God, saith the Lord.* The fear of God, and honouring the old Man, is commanded with the same breath, & linked together in the same sentence.

3. Though you be very aged, yet you may be very good, was not *Eli* very good? Yet very aged:

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was not *David* very good? yet he was very old when he said, *Lord, now lettest thou thy Servant depart in peace*: was not *Anna* very good? Yet she was very aged: who doth not know what a good man *Paul* was? Yet, saith he, *Paul the aged*, good *John* was aged *John*. Possibly, then you may be very good, though you be very aged, labouring under much infirmity.

4. And though your flesh be weak, yet the Spirit may be willing, *the flesh indeed is weak*, said Christ, when his Disciples slept through natural infirmity, for it was late at night, and they were full of grief, but *the Spirit is willing*, said he also, and where the Spirit is willing he will pass by the weakness of the flesh, and accept the willingness of the Spirit.

5. These infirmities of old age are such, as are not the fruit of our own sin (the more any infirmity is caused by sin, the more afflictive it is; for sin is the sting of death) I confess indeed they may be sometimes; for the sins of youth do sometimes bite fore in age. I eat so much of the forbidden fruit (said a good man) when I was young, that God was fain to give much wormseed to kill the worm. But the infirmities of old age are generally the decays of nature, not of grace.

6. They are good warnings of our change approaching, and by them we dye daily, that at last we may dye graciously, and comfortably.

7. And who are those that God doth reveal himself unto but to his old friends, those he will acquaint with his secrets, & make known his mind un-

The Old Mans Staff.

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to, *Job. 12. 12.* With the Ancient is wisdom, and in length of dayes understanding.

8. And though your legs be weak, yet they may be strong enough to carry you to Heaven, that better Country, wick you are now going to, and are very near; indeed your own present Country is a good Country, but the Country you are now going to is a better Country, *Heb. 11. 6.*

1. Better in regard of buildings, whose builder and maker is God, *Heb. 11. 10.*

2. Better in regard of Inhabitants, where no unclean thing doth enter, *Rev.*

3. Better in regard of quietness, and freedome from trouble, where all tears shall not only be wiped from our cheeks, but out of our eyes (as the Greek word bears it, *Rev. 7.*) insomuch as the eye shall never breed a tear again, nor be the womb of tears.

4. Better in regard of riches, where you shall have an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away.

5. Better in regard of pleasure, for saith the Psalmist, *at thy right hand there are rivers of pleasures, and that for evermore.*

6. Better in regard of largeness, for if the whole Earth be but as a pins head in comparison of the Heavens, then surely there is room enough in Heaven, for every one to enjoy a greater Kingdome, then all *England* doth amount unto.

7. Better in regard of self subsistence, here one Country doth depend on another, but Heaven is that

that Country alone which doth depend upon no other Country.

8. Better in regard of our freedome from needs and necessities. It was *Augustines* Prayer. Deliver me, O Lord from my necessities. It is a great mercy now to have bread to eat when we want it, but it is a greater mercy to have no need of it. A great mercy it is to have a good bed to lye on, and so to sleep quietly, but it is a greater mercy to have no need of bed or sleep. This is the state of that Heavenly Country, where you have not these blessings, But where you have no need of them.

9. Better also it is in regard of continuance, where every mercy and blessing grows upon the stalk of Eternity; and if it be a good thing to have a Lease of a good house and Land for one hundred years, what a blessed thing then is it to have a glorious Mansion and Inheritance lying in the Fields of Eternity? When you come to a great Palace, and see fair Barns and Stables and out-houses, you say then, if the out-rooms and Stables be so costly and sumptuous, how costly and glorious is this Palace within? why? lift up your eyes and behold that spangled Cannopy of the Heavens, that is over your head. Are not the Sun and Moon and Stars glorious? Yet these are but the out-houses of Heaven, and if these out houses be so glorious, how glorious is the Palace within? Yet this is that Country, that better Conntry, that you are going and drawing nigh unto, and your passage thither is very short, for no sooner do ye step out of this World, but (if
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godly, gracious, and in Christ, you step immediately into that Country, there is no sleeping of the Soul after death: some have dreamed of such a sleep, but Solomon tells us that *the body upon death goes to the dust, & the Spirit unto him that gave it, Ecclesiastes*. Christ said to the Thief, *this day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*, and the Apostle Paul tells us that Paradise and the third Heaven are one and the same thing, 2 Cor. 12. Yea, saith paul, *I am in a strait betwixt two, not well knowing whether I should desire to dye for mine own enjoyment, or to live for the Service of the Churches, Phil. 1. 22, 23, 24.* whereas if the Soul did sleep in the Grave with the body, he needed not to have been in that strait. *I desire*, said he, *to be dissolved, and to be with Christ*; If with Christ presently, How can the Soul sleep with the body in the dust? But we know, saith he, 2 Cor. 5. 1. *That if our earthly house of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, Eternal in the Heavens*. What then though your turff house now be ready to fire into a Feather with every spark of distemper, is there not enough in that house above to pay for all. surely there is. Why then should ye not lift up your heads ye old men, and be of good comfort under all your natural infirmities.

2. And as for your moral infirmities, if you would strengthen your self against them and root out these weeds there.

1. Be sure that you study and think much on Christ crucified, who alone is our righteousness and our strength, Temptations, or sins blown out by reason or resolution will easily light again, but quenched in the blood of Christ and they light no more. When the Israelites was stung with the fiery Serpents, he did not stand looking on his swollen arm or leg, but on the brazen Serpnt, and so was cured. Christ lieth upon the Cross is our brazen Serpent: and he hath said, *look unto me O all ye ends of the Earth and be saved.*

2, Then by way of consideration think, and think much with your selves, what an evil thing it is to sin when a man is ready to dye. Thus you leave not your sin, but your sin you.

3. Be sure that you do not chew the Cud of your former sins by musing on them with delight, for thereby you justifie

hie your former practice, but rather mourn over them, for the way to be kept from future sins is to mourn for former, and the way to be kept from sins of old Age, is to mourn for the sins of our youth.

4. But above all things, (under your study of Christ crucified) be sure that you strengthen your love to God in Christ, for if the boughs of the Tree be weak, the way to strengthen them is, not to carry up dung to the boughs, but to lay the dung to the root, for by strengthening the Root, you strengthen the branches. Now the Root of all our mortification is love, for love is the cause of hatred. *Ye that love the Lord hate evil.* Love to God eats out our love to sin, as the fear of God eats out our fear of men, and your love to God is strengthened by the sight of his love to you. For love is the cause of love, the more we see Gods love to us, the more we love him, and do hate our sins. Would you therefore take up your sinful weeds by the roots? Then strengthen your love, and this shall be a Staff in your hand to strengthen and bear you up under all your infirmities both natural and moral

CHAP. III.

The OLD MANS GUIDE.

BVt there is yet one thing remaining and incumbent on the Aged, and that is, to plant the positive grace and virtue, which doth best suit with his soyl and condition.

Quest. What are those good things therefore that Old men especially are to do in their old Age.

Ans. 1. They are full of experience, and therefore should be full of Faith; For though Gods word only be the ground of our Faith, yet experience is a great help to Faith. Now there is a Faith of relyance, and a Faith of assurance. Faith of relyance justifies, Faith of assurance comforts. Old men therefore are to exercise the Faith of relyance, relying upon Christs righteousness, renouncing their own, and to exercise

exercise the Faith of assurance ; For it is ill dying with a doubting Soul. As Zeal is the young mans virtue, so Faith is the old mans grace.

2. Then it is their work and duty to renew their repentance, for they are shortly to appear before the Lord, and to give an account of all that they have done in the flesh ; & will they appear before him in their filthy rags. Now though we are only washed from our sins by the blood of Christ unto Justification, yet we are washed from our filth by the hand of repentance unto sanctification. For as God promised to wash us with clean water, so he commands us to wash our selves, *Isai. 1.* And if a man will not wash and repent at last, when will he repent ? When the leaves are off the trees, we see the birds neasts in the Trees and bushes. Now in our old age our leaves are off, then therefore we may see those neasts of sin, and lusts in our hearts and lives, which we saw not before, and so be sensible and repent of them.

3. Then are they also to be much in reading the Scripture, Meditation, and Prayer, for by this reading they shall gain knowledge : by meditation upon their reading they shall add affection to their knowledge, and by Prayer they shall add devotion unto their affection.

4. And because they are ready to weigh Anker, and to set sail for the other World, it will be good for them to observe what is the proper work of this World, and to be much therein : For *everything is beautiful in the time thereof.* Now is a time for Believing : Heaven is no time for Faith, for in Heaven we live by sight. Now is a time for repentance, in Heaven there is no repentance, for there is no sorrow. Now is a time for Patience, in Heaven there is no Patience under Affliction, for there is no Affliction. Now is a time of hearing the Word preached, and for Sacraments and Ordinances ; there is no preaching, Sacraments and Ordinances in Heaven. Now is a time to relieve the Poor, in Heaven there is no room for such charity : It is that Country where no beggar lyes at your door. Now is a time to observe our Relations, in Heaven there are no such Relations, for *they neither marry, nor are given in Marriage, but are as the Angels.* Now therefore,

therefore, what ever is in the power of your hand to do, do it with all your might, for in the grave there is no work, nor in Heaven there is none of this work whether you are going. This therefore, that is to be done here and cannot be done there, is now to be done especially,

5. Then it is the old mans work and duty to live much in a little time, & to be more exact and strict in his life then ever, for the nearer the stone comes to the Center, the faster it moves; the more wisdom any man hath, the more exactly he works. Wisdom and exactness go together. See that you walk exactly, not as fools, but as wise, sayes the Apostle. Now gray hairs should be found in the way of wisdom: and the more frequently a man doth work, the more exactly he may do the same. Now those that are ancient, have, or should have been frequent in holy duties, they therefore of all men are to live & walk most exactly. Thus it shall not be said of them, as Seneca says of one, *he did not live long, but he was long.*

6. Then are they to knock off from the World, and to use the World as if they used it not, for *the fashion of this World passeth away, & the time is short, therefore their moderation should be known unto all men, for the Lord is at hand.* If a tooth be to be drawn and the gum be cut, the tooth doth come out with ease, but if it be fast set in the gum, and not first loosened from the gum, it comes out with much difficulty; and what is the reason that many dye with such difficulty; but because they are so fast set in their worldly gums, they are not loosened from their relations. Good therefore it is for old men, who are upon the brink of death to cut their gum, and to loosen themselves from this world and all their Relations.

7. Then let the old man take heed of all those evils, that may and will stayn the glory of his old Age. All sins do leave a blot and stain behind them, but youthful sins do especially stain old age. For the sin is the greater as it is more contrary to the sinner. It is an evil thing for any man to be unjust, but worst for a Judge to be so, because there is a special repugnancy betwixt the sin & the sinner; now there is a special repugnancy betwixt old men and youthful sins. Give me a young man indued with an old mans virtue, Wisdom. Give

me

me an old man indued with a young mans grace, Zeal. But a young man vitiated with an old mans sin, Covetousness or an old man defiled with a young mans sin, Wantonness are an abomination both to God and man, and are stained deeply and greatly. A certain *Lacedemonian* being asked, *Why he suffered his Beard to grow so long*; To the end, said he, *that looking on my white hairs I may be put in mind, not to do any act unbecoming my hoary whiteness.*

8. Then it is their duty also to prepare for death, their great change and dissolution, it was the complaint of *Caesar Borgia*, *When I lived, I provided for every thing but death, now I am ready to dye, I am not provided to dye*; Such providers in the world there are very many, but shall I provide for a Journey and not for this great Journey? This is every mans work, but the old mans especially. For though the young mans Candle may go out, the old mans will and shall.

Quest. *But what should the old man do that he may be fit to dye?*

Resp. God will give dying grace upon dying ground, yet.

1. He must be sure to do the work of this present day, the only way to be fit for the work of the Morrow, is to do the work of the present day.

2. Then let him examine himself and make his reckonings even with God, that when he comes to dye, he may have nothing to do but to dye.

3. Then let him resign and give up himself, and will to God afresh. Thus Christ did as soon as he drew nigh to death. *If it be possible*, said he, *let this cup pass, yet not my will, but thy will be done*, which he did again and again, at his first approach unto death, and this he did in his last words, *Father into thy hands I commend my Spirit.*

4. Let him long after Heaven, and not be afraid to dye, for if he be in Christ, death it self is his. *All things are yours*, saith the Apostle, *life and death, for ye are Christs*, and who is afraid of his own? The Child is not afraid of the great Mastiff, but puts his hand into the Dogs mouth, and if you ask him why so? For he is our own Dog saith the Child. Now if a man be in Christ, this great Mastiff Death is his own, and therefore why would he be afraid thereof? Yea, why should

he not be willing to dye? was *Eliab* unwilling to go into the fiery Chariot? Is the Child unwilling to ride home, because it is a trotting horse that he must ride upon? No, what then, though it be an hard and a sore sickness that you must ride on yet if it carry you home to your Father, why should you be unwilling to dye? Now the only way to be willing to die, is to get assurance of our interest in Christ, and of our own Salvation. For what is the reason that men are unwilling to dye, but because they cannot tell where they shall land after death. *True*, (sayes one, *I am launching forth into the Ocean of Eternity, but on what shore I shall land God knows? O that I might live one year more, one moneth more, yea one hour more, till I had assurance of Salvation*; And when that comes, then the soul having thereby clasped about & gotten Christ into his arms, cries out and says, *Lord, now let test thou thy Servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy Salvation.*

5. Then also let him set his house in order, make his Will, and leave his Legacies to his Children, Friends; and Posterity. Shall *Achisophel* when he hanged himself, set his house in order before he dyed, and shall not an ancient Christian set his house and heart in order, make his Will, and leave his Legacies unto his Friends and Posterity.

CHAP. IV.

The OLD MANS Will and Legacies.

Quest. But what good thing should the old man leave, or give unto his posterity by his last Will

Reas. 1. Why first, he must be sure to give his Soul unto God while he lives, for if a man gives his Soul to the world and devil while he lives what right hath he to give it unto God when he dyes? If I give away an house or Land while I live, can I justly give it to another when I dye? and if I give away my Soul to sin, world, or devil while I live, how can I justly give it unto God when I dye? it being a Maxime in the common Law, that *Vendens eandem rem duobus falsarius est.*

2. Then

2. Then let him leave a good example unto his posterity, a good Example is a great Legacy ; thus a man speaks when he is dead. as *Abel* doth, *Heb.* 11.

3. And if he would leave some good thing unto his posterity, then let him leave his experiences, an old man is or should be rich in experience : an ancient Christian is or should be an experimental Christian, when therefore he comes to dye, it is his work and duty to leave those experiences unto his Posterity.

4. Yea, then let him leave some good exhortations and admonitions with and upon his Posterity, saying, Come, O my Son, or Daughter, or Friend, I am now going the way of all flesh, when I am gone,

1. Be sure that you fear the Lord and keep his Commandments, for if you keep Gods Commaddments you shall have the comfort of his promises.

2. Be sure also, O my Son, that you give your first and best unto God, for God is the first and best of Beings, and if you honour the Lord with your substance, and with the first fruits of all your encrease, then shall your Barns be filled with plenty, and your presses shall burst forth with new Wine, *Prov.* 3. 10. And why? should you not give your first time and best of your All unto God, who hath given his best and only Son unto you. If you serve God while you are young, God will bless you when you are old! and if you come unto him when you are young, you may build on it, that he will not forsake you when you are old, Thus *David* argued, *Psal.* 71. 18. *For sake me not, O God, now I am old and gray-headed, Why? ver. 17. thou hast taught me from my youth, ver. 5. for thou art my hope, O Lord God, thou art my trust from my youth.* God is engaged (it seems by this argumentation) to those that are good while they are young, to shew mercy to them when they are old. The hand of a Child may pull up a plant when it is young & tender, but if it grows to a Tree all the Horses in the Town cannot pluck it up : so in regard of sin, let your mortification of sin therefore begin betimes. If the paper be clear and clean you may write any thing on it, but if other things be scribbled on the paper, it is then unfit to receive any writing.

ting or impression : so in regard of the impressions of good upon the Soul and heart. Let your vivication therefore and holiness begin betimes, Thus let your first be given unto God.

3. And though you have not so great parts and gifts as others have, yet let your desires of good be as full as any others, what you want in expression make up in affection, when nature is wanting in one thing, it supplies it in another. The blind man hath the best memory, and that God which gives you a heart to desire, will give you your hearts desire, & if your parts be taller by head and shoulders then others, then expect envy, and pray much for humility.

4. In case you sin at any time (as you will often) then be sure, O my Children, that you delay not your repentance ; for the green wound is most easily cured. The Thief indeed was converted at the last, but it was as soon as he was called : some come in at the last hour of the day, but they come when they are called, now you are called to day, and therefore defer not till the morrow.

5. Let your company be good, for every man is as the company of his choice is, Solomon saith, Eccl. 12, *Remember thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth*, which if you please you may read according to the Hebrew, *in the dayes of thy choice or choices*, because in the dayes of youth, a man makes choice of his Trade or Calling : then he makes choice of his Religion : then he makes choice of his Wife, and then he makes choice of his Company. Now then, my Son, have a care of these choices.

6. And let your discourse be alwayes seasoned with salt, for by your words you shall be justified, and by your words you shall be condemned at the last day, sayes our Saviour, for *Sermo Index animi*, words are the Index of the mind, a good Soul never dives at the sign of ill speech.

7. And as for the world and the things thereof, though you may pray for much, yet you must be content with little. The way to have a mercy or blessing is to be content to go without it, & the way to avoid any evil is to submit to it, & to remove it, is to bless God over it, as Job did.

8. Let

8. Let your Recreation, O my Children, be sparing, for they are but *Condimentum* your sauce, and not *nutrimentum*, your nourishment, your Cordial and not your diet.

9. Of all Books study the Bible, of all duties be much in prayer, of all graces exercise faith, of all dayes observe the Lords day, and of all things in Heaven or Earth be sure that you get an interest in God by Jesus Christ.

10. And by any means, O my Children and Friends, *let brotherly love continue, for love is the fulfilling of the Law*: who can break a faggot when the sticks are joyned together by the common Band? but if the sticks be parted, how easily are they all broken? and what is the reason that such judicial breaches are made upon us, but because our pride and want of love doth make such sinful breaches among us. *Cyprian* tells us that the divisions and dissensions of the Churches was the cause of the persecution in the primitive times, for, said he, *Those evils had not come to the brethren, if the brethren had been united or animated into one.* But I am sure that our Saviour Christ saith, *By this shall all men know that ye are my Disciples if you love one another,* and *John* the Disciple of love saith, *By this shall you know that you are translated from death to life because you love the Brethren.* See therefore that you love the Brethren, and that because they are Brethren. For possibly a man may love those that are good, yet not because they are good, for then he would love them better that are better, and those best that are best: if you love those that are good it is well, yet this may be from some self concernment, and your love then will be narrowed and your affections monopolized by some only of your own perswasion or relation, but if you love those that are good, because they are good, this is better, for then you will love all that is good, though of some different perswasion from you: for, *a quatenus ad omnia.* from all to all, is a good consequence. Thus therefore, O my Sons, let your love be stated, continued, and increased, towards men, but above all be sure that you love Jesus, also for Jesus. Jesus is hardly loved for Jesus, but do you love Christ for himself, and let the only measure of your love be to know no measure. Thus let

the old man do and dye, and as he lived by Faith, he shall dye in the Faith.

And as Motives unto all these things let the old man consider,

1. That in so doing he shall leave a sweet perfume behind him, and many shall bless God for him when he is dead.

2. That there is enough in Heaven to pay for all his pains here on Earth.

3. That he is not so weak, but he is strong enough to sin, and shall we be strong to sin and not to serve.

4. That it may be it was late ere he came into Gods work, and if you played away the forenoon of your age, will you not work the harder in the afternoon.

5. That God will accept from youth and old age, from youth because it is the first, and from old age because it is the last, and from much weakness.

6. That Gods promise is very full, for he hath promised and said, *Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full old age, and as a shock of corn cometh in his season,* Job. 5. 26. yea, he hath promised that *those that are planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the Courts of our God, they shall bring forth fruit in old Age, they shall be fat and flourishing,* Psal. 92. 13, 14.

7. That thus they shall not be afraid to dye, but shall say, with that good man dying, *I have not so lived that I am afraid to dye, but I have so learned Christ that I am not afraid to dye.*

8. Yea, and thus shall his old Age be a good old Age, and *he so number his dayes* (it is not said his years, nor his moneths, nor his weeks, but dayes, for his life is so short, that it is rather to be numbred by dayes then by years, or moneths, or weeks,) *that he should apply his heart unto wisdom.*

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